The following poems deal with Harindranath’s love of Nature — his perception of metaphysical realities behind the natural phenomena.

At the outset of 'The Feast of Youth', the poet heralds and assures the world 'a burning day' that breaks over the mountains in the silver-grey enchanted distance. Warm silver fountain-drops 'scatter' the 'music of desire' everywhere. There are exquisite metaphors in the following lines:

The old stars dance enkindled with divine
Ecstatic sparks. The sea is foaming wine!
The moon, a luscious — ripened grape,
O'erfloods the Cup of Youth .... The ocean-shells
Transform themselves for rapture, into bells
For Youth's bright feet of fairy-shape!

(The Feast of Youth, 1918, p.3)

The wind is thrilled by 'scented breath of Youth' and it
'shapes' earth into a rich creative mind, and 'threshes out'
the sleeping snow 'into an active dream of joy':
The world.
A secret flower, its petals hath uncurled
Like visible hints of godly glow!

(The P.Y., p.3)

Unbounded enthusiasm of the poet to accomplish several impossible deeds for the youth of the world, is expressed in the following lines:

Of I shall draw the blue out of the skies
And offer it like wine of paradise
To drunken Youth ....... Fluck the red sun
Like a rich fruit to get before his mouth,
And satisfy his hunger and his drouth
After the moment of our union.

(The P.Y., p.3)

The poet has a flair for colours. His keen sense of colour is revealed in 'The Hour of Rest'. Serenity pervades everywhere. The poet personifies the village that 'sleeps' with all its huts. The 'tired day' comes to an end:

The dazzling knife of sunset cuts
The throbbing heart of sky,
That bleeds itself to death and shuts
Earth's beauty from its eye.

(The P.Y., p.9)
'The flower of rest' is 'blossoming' on earth, hill and stream. There is a panoramic view of the western horizon:

The West is like a parrot-wing
Tinged with a peacock-dream!

(The P.Y., p.9)

The poet 'communes' with the flowers which 'hold' in their 'coloured breasts' the 'secrets' of the hours! When he watches the hill he feels as though he has drunk his 'fill of clear, renascent wine' drawn from 'the rich grape of God's will'. He has felt sweetness (i.e. beauty) and fragrance in the world:

There is a sweetness in the world
That I have sometimes felt,
And oft in fragrant petals curl'd
His fragrance I have smelt ....
And in sad notes of birds, unfurl'd
The kindness De hath dealt!

(The P.Y., p.9)

There is the sweetness of all the natural phenomena that comes to the poet through loving them, in 'Sweetness'. There is a close resemblance between them. Flowers are like the poet's thoughts. Rain-showers are like the love he drinks and ashen cloud is like the pain he holds at his heart.
Thunders are like his bold passions. Streams resemble his little songs. The sky is coloured like his youth's dark wine. He loves the earth, its creatures and its beauty very keenly, as it holds his memories in its sod:

I love you Earth! I love you best! You hold my memories in your sod. In you the heart of men seeks rest And makes your heart a lovely God!

(The F.Y., p.15)

In 'Dawn' there is an exquisite description of the dawn:

Through the unfathomable depths of dark
Dawn drops to earth, a lightly-blossomed roce.
The pale sky lit with day's prophetic spark
Laughs inwardly, and glows.
.
.
.
The fire of Beauty thrills my dreamy sense ..... Frail lips of light all secretly I kiss.
My heart-bud blossoms, blossoms in intense,
Ecstatic pain of bliss!

(The F.Y., p.39)

In 'Sunrise' the poet exposes himself to the warm rays of the sun and feels his 'rising glory' in his body. 'He burns in my flesh ..... I turn, a part of his fire'.
The sun follows 'his ancient-beaten track' and the poet feels as though he mounted on the sun and soared 'higher and higher' on 'his ardent back':

The warm sun rises over the eastern rim,  
And journeys towards the shadows of the West,  
I tread the burning, burning path with him,  
Towards the hour of rest.

(The P.I., p.40)

Indeed, this adoration of 'Sun' almost reminds one of a Rigvedic hymn to the God of Fire, 'Agni'. In the Rigvedic hymn, the pressure of a personality is not felt but it is impersonal. Harindranath's poem has the ring of modern life.

We are familiar with the practices in the West of sun-bathing for the sake of health. But in the poem of Harindranath it is sheer adoration coupled with a feeling of the glory of being shaped by the Sun.

There is an exquisite description of the natural phenomena such as clouds in 'Clouds At Daybreak' and the poet's sense of colour is very aptly expressed. 'Pure and frail and fine' little clouds are 'sailing in a line' at daybreak. The child innocently asks these clouds where they are going. They are sailing to the magic country of child's heart's desire:
In our boats we carry
Colours from the skies
Just to flood your body
And your heart with dyes.

(The Coloured Garden, 1919, p.4)

One finds an echo of Shelley in the following lines
of 'Clouds of Rain Time':

"We are ashen children
Sorrowful by birth,
But a happy duty
We fulfil to earth ......
For we burst in tear-drops
Over hill and plain,
Till the world has blossomed
Into flower and grain."

(The C.G., p.6)

'Rainbow' reveals the child's extreme joy and
imagination. The child is excited at the sight of the rainbow
in the sky. The child thinks that there must be an artist
'up in the heaven' who paints the rainbow. The artist's
(i.e. God's) heart must be tender! The child heartily enjoys
the spectacle of rainbow:

"Out of the rainbow
Cup I am drinking
Wonderful splendour!

(The C.G., p.7)
There is the vivid view of sunset in 'Sunset'. The sun 'sets over the plain' just like 'a blood-red bubble' burning the heart of heaven with 'a gold-and-crimson' stain. The daylight is quickly fading: 'purple and violet shadows' are 'drinking the daylight up'. Baby's heart is 'sipping peace from a 'silver-rimmed cup'.'

(The O.G., p. 9)

The poet has delineated with bright colours an excellent picture of butterflies in 'Butterflies':

GORGEOUS - GLEAMING butterflies!
Brightly-dreaming butterflies!

The child wonders at the exquisite beauty of butterflies and asks onto who has created them:

Tell me truly who hath braided
You with gold and finely shaded
Your frail wings with splendid dyes?

(The O.G., p. 10)

Perhaps they are 'bits of sunset-skies' dropped to earth, or they are flowers which fly in splendour, or they are baby's tender thoughts 'running out of baby's eyes'.

'Sleep-Song' contains superb glimpse of moonlight and its serenity. 'The bird of day has flown away to sleep among the hills' and the moon 'tenderly spills her splendour':

Silver laughter thrills
All the dark with starry-gleams

(The C.G., p.25)

The poet asks the moon to shower her faery rain on his baby's weary eyes and take her anguish by surprise and make her smile in joy again.

There is a unique portrait of nightfall upon the earth in 'Night-Mood'. The lonely shadows 'linger on the shore'. The silent sunset sinks upon the sea. The evening draws its pale and dim curtains about the sky and 'covers up' the last lone luminous gold-streak on the mountain-rim:

The skies are dreamy inarticulate dumb
With pain of too tremendous motherhood
Of gold-and-silver stars about to core.

(The Magic Tree, 1922, p.4)

'Imagery' reveals God's overwhelming joy in the creation of the universe and the natural phenomena. God has created the stars and the moons to the music of innermost
flowering joy and desire. He has tried His own love for Himself through the ages and created peacocks, seas and birds:

He weaves a fine tracery of marvellous colours
Around and about him in utter delight,
Till straight through the darkness his laughter comes lambent
Bird like from a cage in a freedom of flight.

(The H.T., p.7)

'Moonlight and Stars' reveals the poet's talent in delineating an excellent picture of the moonlit night. The sky is 'afloat' like a silver-blue bubble. God has sown the stars like silver seeds in the blue sky and opened the moon in the sky 'like a flower'.

(The H.T., p.19)

'Fantasy' describes the way in which God has created this universe, the sun, the moon, the stars and the nature and the like. God works Himself into a mood of birds, flowers and bees, and He sees through countless stars which are His myriad little eyes. Like a child He blows the bubbles:

The golden sun and silver moons are bubbles that He blows
From out the sky-bowl sapphire-hued
he holds betwixt His knees.

(The N.E., p.22)

'Camels' is a testimony to the poet's wide sweep of imagination which creates the picture of camels, at dusk. The poet at dusk sits and gazes into his spirit's glass wherein his visions pass like camels one by one:

O'er cloud-camels wander in the sky's
Dim deserts lone and bare
A-tinkling stars like silver bells
Among the dusky air.

(Perfume of Earth, 1922, p.24)

"Mr. Chattopadhyay has a rare and often a mystic eye for the picturesque in nature, and some of his figures drawn from Nature to illustrate his visions have the touch of a primeval poet. He looks straight into the face of nature, and he tells us with sincerity and with insight what he sees. Take, for instance, the little poem at page 24: Camels".

The whole poem is quoted.}

Nature's superb beauty in moonlit night is revealed in "Moonlight." The moon with 'silent silver feet' walks from street to street, 'transmuting' with her wand every man and tree into 'a silver mystery':

Drunk with her wine of silver glory
We trod as in some faery-story
Sudden silver roads that led
To silver shops across the street,
Where men with silver hands and feet
Seemed to be buying silver bread.

(Ancient Wings, 1923, p.12)

The poet's earnest longing for the vicinity of nature is evident in 'Transmutation'. There is an echo of W.B.Yeats in this poem (cf. 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'). He has grown weary of 'this house of clay' and therefore he will arise and go away into the woods alone:

I'll go and live among the silent woods
And touch the naked splendour of the birds,
That flit about like fiery-painted moods
No man dare clothe in words.

Alone I'll sit and dream of mystery
Until, from out the dust of barren hours,
All suddenly I burgeon like a tree
Tint with a sense of flowers.

(A.W., p.24)
Probably no other poem has pictured so beautifully and concretely the fact of the invisible changes wrought in this world.

Simple things in nature desire to become great and beautiful. The process of creation is a ceaseless cycle of desire. This is brought forth in 'The Cycle'. The clod of clay, in an eternal hour, desires to be a flower. And man grown hungry to be somewhat greater than man and turn Creator:

Creation with its shadow and its fire
Is but a ceaseless cycle of desire.

(Gray Clouds and White Showers, 1924, p.2)

In 'Marriage' the world itself is a marriage-song. The natural phenomena are the ancient guests 'that throng' God's marriage-hall. God, 'the dim Player', loves to hide a separate world in everything and in that separate world wants to bring the bridegroom to the anxious bride.

(G.C.W.S., p.7)

This poem is a fine expression of the metaphysical sensibility of Harindranath. The last line is a beautiful one emphasizing the hand of God in keeping alive the spirit of life and creation.
Wherever the poet goes he senses the things which are yet to come in this world. This is revealed in 'Futurity'. He perceives the phenomena of nature and realises that these will pave the way for the charming and wonderful things in the years to come. Nay, a world of countless yet-unfashioned things to be imprisoned in the precious words of poets is yet to come:

All these I meet
At every turning of Life's lonely street
Each moment when myself I seem to see
Some future being in eternity.

This poem is an example of Harindranath's capacity to remain ever a stranger to himself by observing the new things coming up every moment.

In the Nature's infinite beauty lies Life's meaning. This is expressed in 'Deafness'. The poet's heart rejoices at the limpid splendour in the gem, the cool Spring breezes, blue haze in the dawn's light, the purple stillness of the night, white delicate herds of starry deer. These are God's voices.

(Out of the Deep Dark Well, 1924, p.21)
Time appears to the poet to be 'the painted lie'
eternity has told. This is revealed in 'Time':

Time is the painted lie
Eternity has told,
And thus it is the morning sky
Is pink and gold.

(Cross Ronia, 1934, p.34)

For a western poet like Andrew Marvel time symbolises
suitability and therefore there is the necessity of our
fulfilment as early as possible. But to Harindranath time by
bringing about changes seems to paint 'lies' only. If only we
escape from the clutches of time we would go beyond the
'painted lie'. Once again the metaphysical importation is
very much evident, despite the poetic sprightliness.

In 'Nature And The Poet' the law of nature is dealt with.
The law of nature is immutable, flawless and inscrutable. It
works from the bottom and stirs everything. Human reason cannot
'plumb' the way the seasons occur in nature. Man cannot know
how God's delight has created beauty for man. Man does not
know why glories burn and best, why music hums and flows. He
cannot fathom into mystery that surrounds life and nature:

To know, the only way
Is by the lonely way
That winds and goes within
To thine Alone:
Wearing no mask again,
We shall not ask again
For Something knows within
What is unknown.

(Strange Journey, 1936, p.93)

There is a beautiful depiction of lightning, thunder and the storm in 'Cloudland':

Cold-breasted lightning mates dark-bosomed thunder,
Cloud-trumpets blare, and foaming spaces neigh
In the divine procession, - winds are steeds
Caparisoned with elemental wonder
Of rainbowed shower and rushing flame that bleeds
Intoxicated slendours
Earth to-day
Pulsates and shivers under
The stress, the storm which finally release
The prisoned angel of white-robbed peace:
.............
The earth behind the veil
Tingles into a carnival of bloom.

(Fifteen Drypoints, 1939,
Drypoint - 3)

'Midnight Cry' expresses loneliness of the midnight and there is some resemblance between this loneliness and that of the poet's soul which cries in the dark:
Embodiment of midnight loneliness,
How like a human soul you stare and cry
At the black vacancy whose wide caress
Holds you a prisoner beneath the sky!

(F.D., Drypoint - 9)

The poet has delineated an excellent picture of the evening and the country-crafts and the paddy-boats in 'On the River Hooghly'. The row of country-crafts seems drowsing and the paddy-boats lie like 'some dream-brothers', under the magic spell of the evening:

See how the whole horizon-line is dyed
In pleasant hues which deepen and withdraw
Gradually into darkness huge with starry awe.

O! the evenfall
In like deep magic and, beneath its wand,
The row of country-craft seems drowsed beyond All thought of sailing.

Paddy-boats! you lie
Like some dream-brothers met under the sky Quietly interlinked, beside each other,
The offspring of some unknown selfsame mother.

(F.D., Drypoint - 12)

There in an excellent and vivid description of the
The rising sun in 'The Poet and the Scientist'. The sun is compared to the ruddy cock:

The Sun, a plump and ruddycock,  
Comes everyday at six o'clock;  
About his round and haughty head  
The crest of frill in flaming red.  
See how he roams about and struts  
Between the clouds, the builded huts  
In the far village of the sky;  
From lane to lane he passes by.  
Nearer how his regal voice a-glow  
Colours all heaven with its crow.  

(The Map of the World,  
1939, p. 14)

Nature itself is artist in 'Artist'. The poet also is an artist. He has loved life 'with all its coloured hours'. He has loved Nature whose rare 'sweetness lies in passionate futilities that pass'. He has loved sorrow 'plying its olden task through life's events', transforming time and space into silent and uncanny mask:

I have loved life with all its coloured hours  
Masking eternal loneliness and lust  
Since earth is one large loneliness of flowers  
Which celebrate old matings in the dust.  

(Lyrical, 1944, p. 16)
In 'Times' Tractor', time is a tremendous tractor which always sears things in this vast universe. The moon is a sickle and the heaven 'an ample field':

Time's old tractor labours
Between man's death and birth,
And gods and men grow neighbours
And heaven yields to earth.

(A Treasury of Poems,
1948, p. 15)

With the help of an image of a tractor—a modern machine—Harindranath is able to work out the implications of his feelings regarding the rise and flow of eternal life.

In 'Night' there is a vivid picture of night. One can experience the pitch darkness of the night; this experience is compared to a Black Cat:

Nothing of her is loud or ribald,
Black Cat Night at the threshold lies
Glossy-pawed and glass-eye- ball ed,
Green and cold are her countless eyes,
Her whiskers are pale wisps of mist
Without a twirl, without a twist.

(A.T.P., p. 16)

Beauty has ever walked in deeper pride each time a dream has been denied to man. Whatever man desires in life is
not fulfilled. This is expressed in 'Beauty's Secret'. The personification technique is one of the outstanding features of romanticism and this technique is used superbly in this poem - the rationality is denial of Beauty which walks invisible to meet the rose.

(A.T.P., p.19)

There is superb description of the natural phenomena in 'Evening Trance':

Gaze, O eyes! on the evening-star  
Risen above the dark hill-top,  
A-throb like the throat of a snow-white peacock  
Sipping pool-water, drop by drop.

(Horizon Ends, 1948, p.9)

Stillness is 'a crystal peacock' which slakes its thirst at the fountain-spring of 'lonely horizons'. Soul is 'princess of infinite poise' which watches dance of the peacock.

The poet’s fad for colours is expressed in 'Prism'. This poem reminds us of Shelley’s 'Adonais' wherein life is compared to a many-coloured dome of glass which stains white radiance of eternity. In this poem colours brim and bubble 'through the mind's uncontrol' and make the world a show of
'gaudy lies'. Then they wander forth and trouble the whiteness of the soul and stain the prism of eyes.

(E.E., p.11)

Nature is a great task-master. It is revealed in 'Eternal Beauty'. Nature's eternal beauty is revealed in the flower and the bird. The flower blossoms for a day and fades away. But it took nature 'aeons of eache' to shape it. A bird in a simple act of flight. But within its little body are 'packed' eternities of heavenward soaring:

Nature, through her unnumbered shapes, Without a flaw fulfils her duty, And through brief beauty but escapes Into a state of deathless beauty.

(E.E., p.42)

The poet's conception of time as the old grey shepherd in 'Resting Place' is worthy of note:

Time, that old grey shepherd, With gold-black sandals on, Is weary of driving his sheep of hours Across the wide meadows of dawn.

(The Divine Vagabond, 1950, p.20)
There is unique conception of Time in 'The Death of Time':

Days are red roses in your hair
And nights are bluely-burning flowers.

The sun and moon are fruits that warm
Life's mystical immortal tree
Unshaken by the frowning storm.

While years are sandals on your feet
Which lightly move towards the goal.

(The D.V., pp. 117-118)

Superb description of heavenly bodies may be traced in 'Fire Imagery':

Or are those orbs in the boundless sky,
Which dazzle the soul and dazzle the eye,
But the ageless wounds in some hero's thigh?

(The D.V., p. 49)

Nature is far more beautiful than the mundane things in the world:

One little singing bird that sits
Upon a branch and sings
Is worth a hundred emeralds
Upon a hundred rings.

(The Curd Seller, S.D.N.D.)
There is a very nice conception of time:

Time is a chequered chess-board
And life is a game of chess.
But man has blundered at the game
And made an awful mess.

(The C.S.)

Observation of beauty in nature is more important
than worship at church:

I had much rather sit and watch
Grey squirrels in their search
Of ripe red fruit on an autumn-bough
Than waste my time in church.

(The C.S.)

There is an excellent stanza (from Spring in Winter, 1955) that depicts the beauty of nature and the serenity of
the sea - peculiar Indian milieu indeed:

Country craft on country craft
Sailing leisurely
Under a cloud-heaped heaven
And over a silent sea
Resembling thought on thought of you
Sailing inside me.

(Roem 79, p.90)
All Nature's meaning could be interpreted through Time's incessant fleeting-process. 'One little rose' will do to justify the scented history of centuries of Spring. This is expressed in 'Justification':

One little rose will do
To justify the scented history
Of centuries of Spring.

(Masks and Farewells, 1961, p.5)